

Message Text

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10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OC-05 CCO-00 OPR-02 SCS-03

SCA-01 AID-05 IO-11 /096 W
----- 130087

O 131055Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8996

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2262

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE, MILI

SUBJ: PRESSURES AGAINST FRANGIE MAINTAINED

1. COUP LEADERSHIP ISSUED "COMMUNIQUE NO.9" AT 0100 HOURS
LOCAL MARCH 13 RECONFIRMING HARD LINE OF COMMUNIQUE NO. 7,
I.E., THAT FRANGIE IS CONSIDERED AS HAVING RESIGNED. THIS
MAY BE PRESSURE TACTIC BY AL-AHDAD, NOT ONLY AGAINST PRESI-
DENT WHO IS REPORTEDLY ADAMANT THAT HE WILL NOT BE FORCED OUT
"ILLEGALLY" BUT ALSO AGAINST PARLIAMENT TO TAKE FAST ACTION.
FRANGIE'S IDEA THAT TWO-THIRDS VOTE OF PARLIAMENT NEEDED TO
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oust him is seen by many as gambit to stay in office,

BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTY GETTING TWO-THIRDS OF DEPUTIES TO ATTEND SESSION LET ALONE VOTE FOR OUSTER.

2. CURRENT PLAN IS THAT LEADING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT WILL CONFER MORNING MARCH 13 AT PARLIAMENT BUILDING WITH COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF HANNA SA'ID AND POSSIBLY REPRESENTATIVE OF AL-AHDAB. SPEAKER ASSAD, KARAME, SALAM, CHAMOUN, PIERRE GEMAYEL ARE AMONG THOSE SCHEDULED TO ATTEND. DEPENDING ON OUTCOME THIS MEETING, THESE DEPUTIES MAY THEN GO TO PALACE ON BEHALF OF ENTIRE PARLIAMENT AND URGE PRESIDENT TO RESIGN. THERE WOULD BE NO PLENARY AND NO VOTE IN PARLIAMENT. IT IS HOPED THAT THIS WOULD BE SUFFICIENT FACE-SAVING AND "LEGAL" DEVICE TO INDUCE FRANGIE TO ABANDON PRESIDENCY.

3. AN ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE BEING MENTIONED IS FOR TWO-THIRDS OF DEPUTIES TO SIGN PETITION URGING FRANGIE TO RESIGN. WE UNDERSTAND A PETITION WAS CIRCULATING EVENING MARCH 12. ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE IT LACKED ONLY A DOZEN OR SO SIGNATURES TO REACH TWO-THIRDS.

4. MUCH DEPENDS ON PARLIAMENT'S ACTION MARCH 13, FOR IF IT FAILS AL-AHDAB HAS INSUFFICIENT MEN UNDER HIS DIRECT COMMAND TO FORCE ISSUE BY ATTACKING THE PALACE, ALTHOUGH HE COULD PROBABLY MUSTER ENOUGH NON-ARMY FORCES. FRANGIE IS CAPABLE OF DETERMINED DEFENSE BY FORCES HE HAS ASSEMBLED THERE. MOREOVER, THERE ARE SEVERE POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS ON AL-AHDAB'S STORMING THE PALACE. FRANGIE MAY BE COUNTING ON THIS, IN HOPE THAT MOMENTUM OF COUP WILL STALL AGAINST VESTED LEGALITY OF PRESIDENCY.

5. THERE WAS LARGE CLASH IN ZGHORTA-TRIPOLI AREA MARCH 12 BETWEEN ZGHORTIOTES LOYAL TO FRANGIE AND UNDETERMINED OPPOSING FORCES. AREA REPORTED QUIET MORNING MARCH 13.

6. WE CONTINUE TO HEAR SPORADIC GUNFIRE IN HOTEL DISTRICT AS OF MID-MORNING MARCH 13. BOTH KATAEB AND LEFTIST SNIPERS ARE REPORTEDLY IN ACTION THERE, THOUGH ACTIVITY CONFIDENTIAL

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IS LOW-LEVEL. SINCE TODAY IS PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY, IT IS HARD TO SORT OUT FESTIVE FROM HOSTILE FIRE.
LAMBRAKIS

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